

Rare Plants of Louisiana



Nymphoides cordata - little floating-hearts Water-Lily Family (Nymphaeaceae)

Rarity Rank: SH/G5 (Historical in Louisiana)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------|-----------|---|------|---|--------|
| State | | | | | |
| Global | | | | | |
| | imperiled | | rare | | secure |

Range: Ontario and Quebec, south to FL and west to LA

Recognition:

- Generic Description: an aquatic plant with floating leaves and aerial flowers; rhizomes are present in the mucky substrate from which slender petiole-like stems arise, producing petioled (stalked) leaves, and umbel inflorescences in the leaf axils; tuberous roots often present below inflorescences
- *Nymphoides cordata* is in general similar to *N. aquatica*, which is a common species of freshwater habitats in the Coastal Zone – the two species are here differentiated
- Leaf blades heart shaped, 3 to 7 cm long, green and often variegated with purplish above, smooth below (*N. aquatica* leaves are larger, to 15 cm long, green above, and appear rough below)
- Stems slender, less than 1 mm wide just below inflorescence
- Fruit a capsule, only slightly exceeding the calyx, versus considerably exceeding the length of the calyx in *N. aquatica*
- Seeds smooth and subglobose, rarely papillate (*N. aquatica* seeds are conspicuously papillate)



Jim Stasz @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Flowering Time: July to September

Light Requirement: Full sun to part shade

Wetland Indicator Status:

OBL – almost always in wetlands

Habitat:

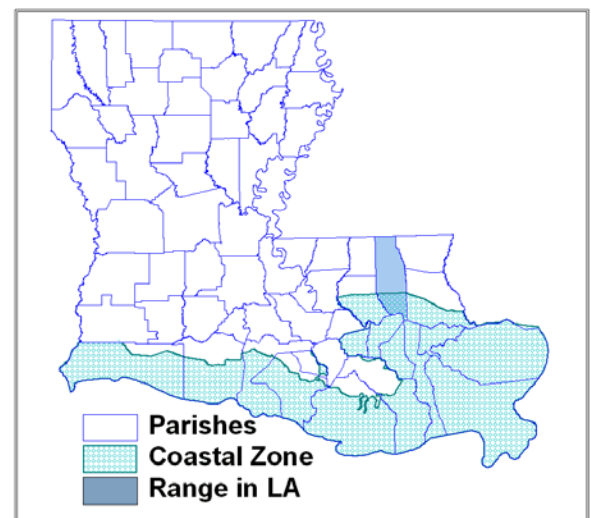
We have one historical record of *N. cordata*, collected from a pond within a cypress-swamp blackgum swamp near Ponchatoula. Louisiana is at the western edge of the range of *N. cordata*.

Threats:

Subsidence and potentially salt water intrusion

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Maintain open aquatic environments and habitats

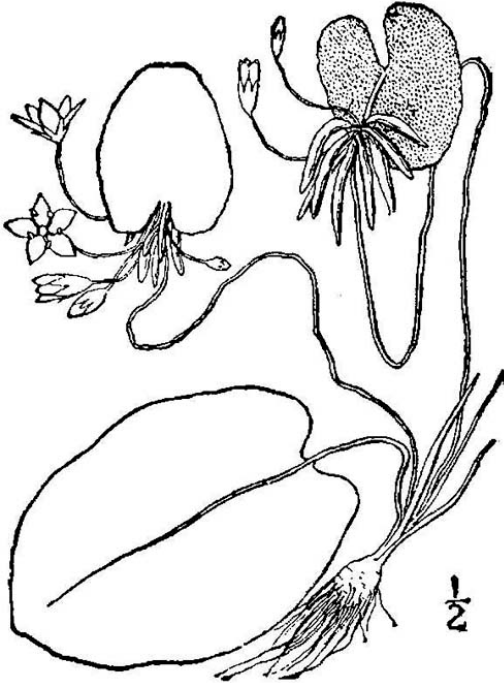


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- Keep an eye out for this species when traveling the swamps on and around Joyce WMA

LA River Basins: Pontchartrain



Above: Line drawing of *N. cordata*. USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *Illustrated flora of the northern states and Canada*. Vol. 3: 18.



Right: Herbarium specimen of *N. cordata* – this specimen was collected in 1938 and represents the only Louisiana record. Specimen image courtesy of LSU Herbarium.

References:

- Clewett, A. F. 1985. Guide to the vascular plants of the Florida Panhandle. University Presses of Florida, Florida State University Press, Tallahassee. 605 pp.
- Godfrey, R. K. and J. W. Wooten. 1981. Aquatic and wetland plants of southeastern United States: dicotyledons. University of Georgia Press. Athens, GA. 933 pp.
- Tobe, J. D., K. C. Burks, R. W. Cantrell, M. A. Garland, M. E. Sweeley, D. W. Hall, P. Wallace, G. Anglin, G. Nelson, J. R. Cooper, D. Bickner, K. Gilbert, N. Aymond, K. Greenwood, and N. Raymond. 1998. Florida wetland plants: an identification manual. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Environmental Protection. 598 pp.
- USDA, NRCS. 2008. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA

Funding provided by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

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